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THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN AUSTRIA

Description

An analysis of the available intelligence on the organization and operations of the Austrian Communist Party, with a brief review of the history of the Communists in Austria and some observations on the prospective policy of the Party.

23 December 1944

E. Austria
7.7

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SUMMARY

Available intelligence points to the existence in Austria of a Communist underground, although evidence regarding its size and activities is fragmentary and in some cases contradictory.

A striking feature of the history of the small Communist Party in Austria is its consistent opposition to Anschluss with Germany since 1927. This opposition explains Communist support of Schuschnigg in the 1938 crisis and the anti-Nazi propaganda which continued even during the period of the Russe-German pact.

Until recently, Communist underground operations have apparently relied almost entirely upon cells averaging five or six members each, which, for the most part, engaged in non-violent activities. Since 1943, however, there have been recurring reports of Austrian Communist guerrilla operations in the mountains of Styria and Carinthia. These operations are reported to be related to those of Slovenian elements of the Yugoslav Partisans and also to the formations of the "Austrian Freedom Front," first proclaimed in 1942 by a conference of Austrian war prisoners in Russia. Freedom Front manifestoes have stressed the need for expulsion of the Nazis and permanent emancipation of Austria from domination by Germany.

The history and current pronouncements of the Austrian Communist Party indicate that the future policy of the Austrian Communist Party in the post-war period will center on rejecting all forms of grossdeutsche orientation and on replacing it by a pro-Soviet orientation. The party will probably subordinate all social and economic demands to the policy of collaborating with all democratic parties for the elimination of the Nazi system in Austria.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN AUSTRIA

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNISTS IN AUSTRIA BEFORE 1933

The Communists were an insignificant numerical minority in Austria in the period before 1933, when they were a legally constituted political party. While the Communists in Germany were an important political force among the workers because they adopted a position far to the left of the moderate Social Democrats and thus attracted younger workers to a program which promised them a quick solution for their economic and social difficulties, the Austrian Communists had to compete with a Social Democratic party which had similar goals. The Austrian Social Democrats looked upon themselves as orthodox "Marxians," and as a group they represented the most "leftist" socialist movement in Europe. They were one of the few socialist parties in Europe which looked upon the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917 as their "revolution," and from 1919 on they were both sympathetic to and interested in the communist experiments in the Soviet Union. For many years the Austrian Social Democrats attempted to bridge the gap between the socialist Second International and the communist Third International. Furthermore, the Austrian Social Democrats avoided blame for some of the mistakes made by the Austrian Government, since from 1920 on the Social Democrats refused to join a coalition government. It was their goal to obtain a majority and govern Austria alone. Their refusal to enter a coalition government was similar to the policy of the Communists who, in that pre-"United Front" period, were insistent that no compromises be entered into with a "bourgeois" government.

As a consequence of this leftism of the Austrian Social Democrats, the Austrian Communists were able to win

over only a tiny segment of the working population. In the elections of 1919, for example, the Communists received only 56,000 votes in Vienna, as compared to 700,000 for the Social Democrats. In the provinces the Communists received 12,000 votes as against 600,000 for the Social Democrats. The Communist "putsch" of 15 June 1919, in which about 10,000 individuals took part, was a complete failure primarily because it was directed against the Social Democratic leadership which had the loyalty of the overwhelming majority of workers. As long as the Social Democrats were able to convince the Austrian workers through their large vote and their municipal reforms that they were on the road to realizing socialism, the Austrian Communists had little hope of attracting many workers to their party. And a movement like the Social Democratic party which consistently received 42 percent of the country's electoral vote had little difficulty in convincing the workers that it would soon win the majority of the votes and be in a position to make Austria a socialist state through legal means.

The Communists began to win a few thousand new converts among the workers outside Vienna after the riots in Vienna on 15 July 1927.[1] The tendency of the Social Democratic leadership to engage in compromising tactics,

1. A short time before these riots, a group of fascist Heimwehr men had fired into a Socialist parade in a small town near Vienna. A court had freed these Heimwehr men, and as a consequence a Socialist demonstration was held in Vienna, which soon turned into a riot. Ninety persons lost their lives, and the Palace of Justice was destroyed by fire.

at a time when the clerical-fascist Heimwehr was becoming increasingly aggressive toward the Social Democrats in the small towns, caused many workers to become disillusioned with the Party. As a consequence many workers in the provinces went over to the Communist Party, which, if nothing else, could meet aggression with aggression. With this first bit of success in eight years, the Austrian Communist Party began to receive special help from the communist International. Vienna was made the center for the Balkan section of the Communist International, and it was here, too, that the weekly information bulletin of the Comintern, the "International Press Correspondence," was published.

The Communists gradually increased their party membership and their electoral votes in the industrial centers outside Vienna. A new party "line" was set up according to which the Communists were to oppose the Anschluss and to promulgate a program of "National and Social Liberation of the People," in which Austria was to strive for an independent existence. Between 1927 and 1931 the Communist Party increased its membership from 2,000 to 6,000, and in the 1932 elections they received 22,000 votes in Vienna, and 38,000 in the provinces. In Vienna, however, the Communists were still unable to compete with the well-organized Social Democratic Party for workers' votes, and as a result their adherents in Vienna numbered 60 percent less in 1932 than in 1919. In the industrial towns of Steyr, Linz, Graz, and Klagenfurt, the Communists had relatively more success and were able to triple their vote in the interval between 1919 and 1932. Despite the increase in voting strength, the Communists in Austria were still a tiny minority in the working-class population.

II. THE RISE OF THE COMMUNIST UNDERGROUND AFTER 1933

After the Austrian Communists were declared illegal on 28 May 1933, however, the Party began to grow, in influence if not in numbers. The Communists considered themselves the first victims of fascism in Austria, and in view of what had occurred in Germany a few months previously they could draw a comparison between what had happened to the workers' parties under Nazism and what might happen to even the powerful Social Democratic Party under the Dollfuss dictatorship. The Communists continued, as always, to attack the leadership of the Social Democratic Party for failing to take the initiative against the inevitable repressions, and attempted to convince the Social Democratic rank and file that they, the Communists, were best qualified by insight to anticipate future events. That many Social Democrats were convinced by the Communist arguments is evidenced by the fact that in late 1933 many left-wing Social Democrats in the provinces and many members of the Social Democratic militia, the Schutzbund, especially in Linz and Steyr, joined hands with the illegal Communists.

The greatest increase in Communist influence took place after the February 1934 uprising of the Social Democrats and its Schutzbund, an uprising which developed in Vienna, Linz, and in other provincial cities of Austria as the result of the banning of the Social Democratic Party by the Christian Social dictatorship of Dollfuss. Many Social Democrats felt that aid and assistance to overthrow the Christian Social dictatorship and thus to return to power could come only from the Russian Communists, while little active assistance could come from the British Labor Party, the French Socialist Party or the Czechoslovak

socialist parties. For the first time since 1918 the Austrian Socialists felt isolated, and many of them turned to the Communists with their ties in the Soviet Union for the hope of overthrowing the clerical-fascists of Austria.

During the uprising, Communists and Social Democrats fought together in many of the provincial industrial centers. When the uprising was crushed by the Army and its auxiliary, the Heimwehr, many units of the Socialist Schutzbund went over to the Communist underground. Others, in danger of being caught, escaped to Czechoslovakia. Of these, 1,200 finally made their way to Russia, where many of them joined the Communist Party.

The "United Front" concept of the Communists was thus put into operation in 1934. In the reconstitution of the Socialist Schutzbund as an illegal organization after February 1934, membership was thrown open to the Communists as an illustration of this new cooperation between former enemies. By the early part of 1935, eight hundred Socialists and Communists were working together in organizing short term strikes in many factories in Vienna and in the provinces, and in reconstructing illegal trade unions.

By April 1934 the Austrian Social Democrats had changed their party name to that of the Austrian Revolutionary Socialists. In order to explain the changes in the party goals, the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Socialists sent the following letter to the Socialist and Labor International on 20 May 1934:[1]

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1. Acceptance of this change in party tactics within Austria was made by the exiled Social Democratic leaders at a meeting in Brünn, Czechoslovakia, in 1936. Otto Bauer and Fritz Adler, both left-wing in sympathies as well as in identifications, agreed that under a fascist dictatorship the workers could only meet force with force, and that in light of the special conditions under which the Austrians found themselves there was no practical alternative to the above-mentioned program.

> The fascist dictatorship in Austria has dispelled all democratic and reformist illusions among the workers. The workers know today that fascist force can only be broken by the force of the workers, by a popular uprising. To bring about this popular revolution is the task which the Austrian Socialists have set before themselves. The aim of this revolution, however, can only be the conquest of the power of the State and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat which will destroy the political and economic foundations of capitalist society in order to realize a classless society.

The banning of the Social Democratic Party and the resultant leftward trend of the Revolutionary Socialists proved to be a windfall for the Communists. Many left-wing Social Democrats feeling that little ideological difference existed between Revolutionary Socialists and Communists decided to join the Communists who had the backing of the Soviet Union. As a result, Communist Party membership increased from 6,000 in 1932 to 24,000 in April 1934, and to 48,000 by August 1934. At the twelfth party rally of the Communists held in September 1934, one-half of the newly elected central committee members were former Social Democrats. One observer estimated that the Communists had grown tenfold between 1934 and 1938, and that by January 1938 there were 60,000 Communists in underground organizations.[1] Evidence corroborating this estimate was given by a former leader of the Revolutionary Socialists, who felt that by January 1938 the Communists composed about one-third of the membership in the Vienna underground.[2] Other sources state that between 1934 and 1938 the Communists met with their greatest success among the youth and the metal and building workers, while their smallest gains were made among the older workers and the railroad workers.[3]

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1. G. E. R. Gedye, Betrayal in Central Europe, New York, 1939, p. 114.
2. Dr. Otto Leichter, now in New York City. See also CID 33855, 6 May 1943.
3. Interviews with Fritz Adler, Otto Leichter, Manfried Ackermann.

The effect of Nazism upon the labor movement and the fear which the Russians had of Nazi expansion into Austria caused the implementation of the 1927 "line" of the "national and social liberation of the people" by a series of patriotic slogans, in which the entire population, Catholic as well as Socialist, peasant as well as worker and middle class, were to unite to prevent Nazism from increasing its influence within Austria. Since they looked upon Nazism as a greater evil than Austrian clerical-fascism, the Austrian Communists initiated attempts to organize a working alliance with the unpopular Schuschnigg government in order to strengthen it against the Nazis. This move lost the Communists a number of followers among the former Social Democrats. This Communist "line" was consistent with the anti-Anschluss line of 1927, emphasizing "national independence" for Austria.

From 1934 on, the Austrian Communists emphasized the need for Austrian independence. Thus in 1935 the illegal communist group issued a manifesto which said:[1]

> The peoples' front in Austria...will become...a fighting front for peace and liberty, and a fighting front for the independence of the country, against Hitler fascism.

In March 1938, two days after Hitler took over Austria, the Austrian Communist Party issued the following manifesto to the Austrian people, reiterating this appeal for Austrian independence:[2]

> People of Austria! Protect yourselves. Resist the foreign intruders and their agents. Unite, Catholics and Socialists, workers, and peasants. Unite in the front of all the Austrian people. All differences of outlook, all party differences, recede before the

1. N. Koplenig, "On the Road to a United Revolutionary Party," Communist International, Vol. 12, No. 19, (5 October 1935) p. 1383.
2. "Manifesto of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Austria." Communist International, Vol. 15, No. 4 (April 1938), pp. 405-6.

> sacred task now confronting the Austrian people: Unite against Hitler; Unite to chase Hitler's soldiers out of Austria....
>
> The Austrian people will continue to fight, and, with the help of the world peace front, will create a free, independent Austria.

With the conclusion of the German-Russian pact of non-aggression in August 1939, the Communists elsewhere developed a new line, which was formulated under the slogan that the war was but a struggle between two imperialisms. This new slogan was not used by the Austrian Communists, who continued to reiterate their Austrian "nationalistic" slogans. Thus in October 1939 the Austrian Communist Party issued an appeal to the Austrians, reiterating their previous slogans:[1]

> We are fighting against the foreign domination of Austria, for the fight of self-determination for the Austrian people. Down with the Commissars and Commandants of foreign rule! The Austrian people must decide for themselves the form of their state organization and their foreign relations.

In sum, then, the Communists developed their greatest strength in numbers and in influence in the period between 1933 and 1938. They were able to develop a working "united front" with the Revolutionary Socialists and to make numerous converts among the former Social Democrats. The Communists were the first of the Austrian parties to develop a program on a basis of nationalism in a country where nationalism in the period after 1918 was almost non-existent.[2]

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1. "The Austrian People's Struggle for Freedom." Communist International, Vol. 16, No. 11 (November 1939), p. 1152. There are marked similiarities between the concepts of a free and independent Austria as given in these excerpts and the Moscow declaration on the future independence of Austria which appeared in November 1943.
2. The Christian Socialists developed a nationalistic program in the period after 1933, but it was more "Catholic" than "nationalistic."

III. PRESENT OPERATIONS OF THE AUSTRIAN COMMUNIST PARTY UNDERGROUND

A. Organization

Information dealing with the Communist underground since 1938 is fragmentary and in some cases contradictory. It is worth noting that few Communists have been found among the members of the German armed forces captured by the Western Allies. One of the few Austrian prisoners with knowledge of the underground Communist movement (he was a member of the Communist Party until his induction in 1938) stated in 1944 that as far as he knew, the Communists were mainly represented in the industrial areas.[1] He did not believe that there was any country-wide organization of the Communists and stated that activities were confined to very small cells, averaging five or six members each, which had difficulty in establishing contacts.[2]

There is some evidence that a limited degree of centralization may have been achieved in recent months, sufficient at least for the issuance of party orders. Undoubtedly, however, the small local cells remain the most important feature of the organization. The Communists are reported to rely on oral contacts for all transmission of information, since many members have been trapped by the Gestapo's false leaflets and bogus cells.[3] The same source contributed the information that the most active segment of the Austrian underground is the Communist youth organization (Jugendbund), but no further details of this group are available. Further light is thrown on the underground's organization by statements regarding its methods

1. Other sources, however, indicate the presence of Communist guerrilla forces in the mountain areas (see below, p. 13).
2. CID #L44507.
3. OSS #20323, 27 July 1943.

of operation.

B. Tactics and Strategy

An Austrian prisoner of war, evidently possessing close contacts with the underground Communist groups, stated in 1944 that the Communists operated within both legal and illegal organizations. Thus, he continued, Communists were trained to work within Nazi organizations, in order to gain influence over wider circles of workers and peasants.[1] Within these organizations the Communists made "modest demands for social improvements among workers, while they supported the Catholics in their requests for greater religious freedom."

A report from Socialist sources outside Austria, made in 1942, said that the Communists maintained underground organizations separate from the Revolutionary Socialists, although they had succeeded in infiltrating the underground organizations of the latter.[2]

In spite of occasional hints of sabotage, the illegal activities of the Communists have consisted mainly of whispering campaigns, spreading information received from Allied radio stations, contacting foreign workers, encouraging slow-downs among industrial workers,[3] and collecting money for the families of the victims of persecution. Few leaflets have been issued by the Austrian Communists, but when used they have been chiefly concerned with specific conditions in the factories, such as long hours, insufficient protection, poor food and wages. In this respect they have been unlike the Gestapo's pseudo-Communist leaflets, which often deal with broad

1. CID #L44507.
2. CID #27675C.
3. OSS #20323, 27 July 1943.

political issues.[1] An informant believed to possess close connections with the Austrian underground states that the Communists have attempted to make converts, not for communism, but for "anti-fascism."[2]

C. The Austrian Freedom Front

The existence of an Austrian Freedom Front, which appears to be related to the sporadic partisan activity in Carinthia and Styria, was indicated by a manifesto issued in March 1942 by a conference of Austrian war prisoners in Russia. This manifesto enumerated the misfortunes of Austria under Nazi rule and laid the blame on Hitler and "the big German capitalists and plutocrats." It continued:[3]

> He [Hitler] tries to convince us that the fate of the German and Austrian people is inseparable from his own fate. This is a shameless lie. The Austrian people have nothing in common with Hitler. Our road leads in a different direction -- by way of Hitler's defeat to a free, independent Austria.... The Austrian people cannot stand aside in the great struggle for freedom and independence. They cannot miss proving their dissatisfaction with the Hitler regime. It is now no longer sufficient to express their dissatisfaction with and hatred of the Hitler regime. It is time to change over from words to active struggle against the Hitler bandits....

The statement that "hundreds of Austrians" were deserting to the "Yugoslav guerrillas" first appeared in the English press in April 1942.[4] By 1943 various excerpts suggesting the existence of Austrian partisans in Carinthia were appearing in the Nazi press and in the American press by way of Yugoslav sources. A report that a program of action was being prepared within Austria by members of the Freedom Front seemed to indicate Communist

1. OSS #20408, 28 July 1943.
2. CID #L-44507.
3. Jenö Kostmonn, Restive Austria, London, 1942, Appendix.
4. Daily Telegraph (London), 27 April 1942.

leadership in the partisan activities. The manifesto issued by this group in 1943 bore clear marks of Communist inspiration. Like the initial manifesto issued in Russia the previous year, it emphasized the hardships of workers, peasants, and the middle classes, and repeatedly identified Prussianism with Nazism.[1]

While in 1943 General Velebit, chief of Marshal Tito's mission to London, stated that he had never heard of such an organization in Austria as the Freedom Front,[2] the secretary of the Slovenian Communist Party said some fifteen months later:[3]

> Cadres of Austrians fought and worked with the Slovene units in the Koroske area, and gradually groups were trained and ready to go back into Austria. These groups were organized on the basis of five men, and some had twenty. They were the nuclei on which the Austrian Freedom Front was to build.
>
> Information from February to June 1944 indicated that the training process was bearing fruit. In July 1944, when I was north of Ljubljana, I learned that the Austrian partisans had blown up the steel railway bridge between Innsbruck and Schwaz on 25 June. This operation was a large one and the information came from a German soldier (Slovene) who came through Innsbruck on 27 June on his way home and promptly deserted to the Slovene partisans.

The above report then went on to state that the Austrian movement was being "watched carefully" by the Slovenes, who hoped that it would soon have a "spirit of its own." There has, however, been some apprehension expressed in Allied quarters, lest Slovene participation in the guerrilla operations denote Yugoslav aspirations for control of the Klagenfurt area.[4]

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1. Reprinted by the Austrian Action Committee, New York, 1943.
2. OSS, ETOUSA, 9 June 1944.
3. CID #L44285, 8 September 1944.
4. OSS #40737-8.

Yugoslav Partisan sources have provided a pamphlet which gives the latest Austrian Communist program of action. This manifesto is supposed to have emanated from a secret meeting of leading Austrian Communists held somewhere in the mountains (Carinthia?) on 11 and 12 June 1944. It appeals to the Austrians to support the "Austrian partisan units which are fighting in Carinthia at the side of the Slovenian people's army, and which contain Catholic peasants, Socialist and Communist workers, as well as Austrian soldiers." Like the appeals of the Austrian prisoners of war in 1942 and the Freedom Front manifesto of 1943, this pamphlet urges Austrian soldiers to desert from the German Army, industrial workers to carry out sabotage, farmers to provide refuge, and intellectuals to combat German propaganda by "spreading the truth." That the Austrian Freedom Front was still in an embryonic stage of organization in June 1944 is evidenced by the statement in the manifesto that a national Freedom Front (Freiheitsfront) is to be organized to establish with the "armies of Liberation" a "Provisional Government for the Free, Independent, Democratic People's Republic."

IV. THE AUSTRIAN COMMUNIST PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE

The manifesto purporting to emanate from Austrian Communists of June 1944 provides a clue to the prospective policy of the Communists in post-war Austria.

The program centers on one decisive point which seems to be common to most communist programs in present-day Europe, namely the subordination of the struggle for social revolution to the struggle for national liberation. The national front policy, which advocates a coalition of all anti-fascist and democratic parties, follows logically from this conception. In the case of Austria, the Nazi system

and its institutions are presented as the work of the German conqueror, and the liquidation of this system is therefore national liberation from foreign conquest. Accordingly, the old Communist slogan of the destruction of capitalism is transformed into the demand for ridding Austria of the German trusts and monopolies. The wording of the program retains the Marxian conceptual framework: "In the struggle for the liquidation of the German trusts and monopolies, the class struggle of the workers merges with the vital economic interests of the Austrian people: the proletarian class struggle assumes a new character and expands into a true people's war."

However, the Marxian phraseology hardly conceals the fact that the Communist strategy based on the national front conception implies the abandonment of the class struggle for the post-war period. The conception implies that whatever measures of expropriation and nationalization are to be taken will be only punitive measures against German or German-controlled enterprises in Austria. The program calls for the confiscation and nationalization of the "German monopolies and large enterprises" in Austria, while the native monopolists are characterized only as their "henchmen" (Spiessgesellen). Since the bulk of Austrian heavy industry, insurance, and banking is at present controlled by German concerns (such as the Göring Combine, the Gustloff Works, the Deutsche Bank, and the Münchner Rückversicherungsgesellschaft), this would actually amount to the nationalization of a large part of Austrian big business. This measure, however, is likely to be supported by all anti-fascist parties in Austria, including the left-wing of the Christian Socialists. Nationalization would not mean the transfer of power from the old ruling classes

to the proletariat. The program calls for class collaboration rather than class struggle: "The Austrian Communist Party will mobilize its entire strength for the realization and consolidation of the unity of the people." Here again, the Marxian ideology is used for justification: "The essential class interests of the workers are in harmony with the general interest of the people." The workers' fight against the fascist exploiters "merges with the common people's struggle for peace, liberty, and the securing of the economic existence."

In practice, the national liberation front is to include all democratic, peace-loving groups and parties that are willing to fight for Austria's independence from "German imperialism." The program mentions the workers, peasants, intellectuals, the bourgeoisie, and the middle-classes. In terms of former political parties, the Communist Party would collaborate with all parties which are against any grossdeutsche orientation and for a democratic republic. They are to form a "provisional government of the free independent democratic people's republic." The program of this government, as the Communists see it, follows rather closely the Free Germany Committee line: abolition of all Nazi laws and institutions, restoration of the democratic rights and liberties, punishment of the German war criminals and Austrian traitors, return of the spoliated property to the rightful owners, etc. The Communist Party declares its readiness to assume responsibility by participating in such a government.

Specifically, the Communist Party sees one of its foremost tasks in the strengthening of the Austrian labor movement as the most powerful democratic force. The program comes out for the creation of a unified labor party and

unified trade unions. This raises the question as to the future relation between the Communists and Social Democrats. The Communists profess their willingness to collaborate with the Social Democrats, provided that the latter abandon their "reactionary grossdeutsche orientation." The utterances of Social Democratic leaders in London and New York offer some gauge of their party's present attitude toward Anschluss. Although some of them still insist that the free Austrian people must have the ultimate decision, the statements of party leaders indicate that Social Democrats as a party will certainly accept the Moscow declaration on Austria, which excludes Anschluss. If, in spite of this, the Communist program is to a very great extent built around a strong repudiation of the grossdeutsche orientation, more than a historical controversy must be at stake.

The Communist program does not merely reject the grossdeutsche orientation, but replaces it by an implicit pro-Russian orientation. "Austria's economic future rests, not in a close connection with Germany, but in an orientation on the geographically and historically conditioned economic relations with Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, with the Balkans, and with the Soviet Ukraina." In other words: the Communist program seeks Austria's economic integration into a zone made up of countries in which Soviet influence is dominant. The Social Democrats, on the other hand, will probably continue to have strong ideological and strategical ties with the Second International and the German party. These ideological and strategical ties could be maintained even if the Social Democrats renounce all efforts to unite Germany and Austria politically. The German Social Democrats will probably again be much more hostile to Soviet influence than the Austrian Party; "independence from Moscow" is likely

to be a precondition for Social Democratic willingness to collaborate with the Communist Party. The Communists regard the Social Democrats Second International as an anti-Soviet front within the labor movement and see in it one of the greatest obstacles to their control over the various national labor parties. A spokesman of the Free Austrian Movement in London declared recently that the Second International would become a "counter-combination" directed against the Allies and would facilitate the rebirth of German power.[1] If the Communists now denounce this Social Democratic tradition as support of "German imperialism," they identify the demand for independence from Moscow with submissiveness to German nationalism and hostility to the idea of Austria's national independence. This strategy, which makes the Social Democratic tradition appear as high treason, may maneuver the Austrian Social Democrats into a precarious position and weaken their hold over the labor movement.

The Communist struggle against Anschluss and against the grossdeutsche orientation may well be essentially a Communist bid for control over the Austrian labor movement, designed to isolate the Austrian Social Democrats. If, as now seems extremely improbable, Germany should go pro-Soviet and Communist, the Communist Party might well revise its attitude and advocate a grossdeutsche orientation. In any case, the "unshakeable friendship with the great Soviet people and with the socialist Soviet Union" will almost certainly determine Communist policy.

The Communist policy of democratic collaboration is likely to be maintained throughout the period of national liberation, that is to say, during the liquidation of the Nazi system and its institutions in Austria. The Communist demands for this period of "provisional government" are such

1. R & A No. 1113.84, 4 November 1944.

that they may be accepted by all anti-Fascist parties, including the Christian Socialists. The Communist program does not contain any indications as to the Party's positive policy after this period, except the one constant factor of pro-Soviet orientation.

Such orientation does not imply a return to revolutionary methods. It may be assumed that the Party will continue to subordinate revolutionary demands to the maintenance of inter-Allied cooperation and friendship with the Soviet Union. Whether the Communist efforts for the creation of a unified labor movement will eventually succeed is a matter of speculation. In any case, past experience in Austria seems to indicate that the Communists would have a much harder contest than in Germany in their struggle for leadership with the Social Democrats. Moreover, substantial numbers of interrogations of Austrian prisoners of war indicate that a large part of the Austrian population identifies the Communist policy with Russian domination and fears the latter probably more than anything else.